What is a Preposition?

A preposition links [nouns](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/nouns.html#noun), [pronouns](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/pronouns.html#pronoun) and [phrases](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/bldphr.html#phrase) to other words in a [sentence](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/subjpred.html#sentence). The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is called the [object](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/objcompl.html#object) of the preposition.

A preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence as in the following examples:

The book is on the table.

The book is beneath the table.

The book is leaning against the table.

The book is beside the table.

She read the book during class.

In each of the preceding sentences, a preposition locates the noun "book" in space or in time.

A [prepositional phrase](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/phrfunc.html#prepositional%20phrase) is made up of the preposition, its object and any associated [adjectives](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/adjectve.html#adjective) or [adverbs](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/arts/writcent/hypergrammar/adverbs.html#adverb). A prepositional phrase can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. The most common prepositions are "about," "above," "across," "after," "against," "along," "among," "around," "at," "before," "behind," "below," "beneath," "beside," "between," "beyond," "but," "by," "despite," "down," "during," "except," "for," "from," "in," "inside," "into," "like," "near," "of," "off," "on," "onto," "out," "outside," "over," "past," "since," "through," "throughout," "till," "to," "toward," "under," "underneath," "until," "up," "upon," "with," "within," and "without."

<http://www.writingcentre.uottawa.ca/hypergrammar/preposit.html>